

MEET YOUR NEW REPRESENTATIVE

Rep. Mike Armstrong has joined House Co-Speaker Clyde Ballard, R-East Wenatchee, on the 12th District's team in the House of Representatives. Mike, a fourth-generation Wenatchee Valley resident, supervises bridge and maintenance crews for the Department of Transportation. He was elected to the Wenatchee School Board in 1997 and has been its president, vice president, and legislative representative. Mike served on legislative committees for the Wenatchee Chamber of Commerce and Washington State School Directors Association, and as president of his PTA and the Music Theatre of Wenatchee. Married in 1979, Mike and Mary have three children: Abe, 14; Cassandra, 11; and Maureen, 9.



EXPECTING STRONGER PERFORMANCE FROM OUR SCHOOLS

Parents want to know that schools are safe and that their children are being prepared for our new century. That means having quality teachers in our classrooms and greater accountability in our schools — goals that both Republicans and Democrats can support.

We have worked hard to set higher standards in our schools and increase the expectations of our students. Some are responding with improved scores and performance. Some still need help. We



must remain watchful to ensure that the Washington Assessment of Student Learning exams remain as appropriate standards and accurate measures of performance. But now is not the time to abandon our efforts.

We must rededicate ourselves to reaching these standards, giving teachers the tools to improve learning, and giving parents greater control over their children's education by providing choice and accountability.

12TH DISTRICT
REPORT

REPRESENTATIVES
CLYDE BALLARD AND
MIKE ARMSTRONG
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600



REPRESENTATIVE
CLYDE BALLARD

2001
12TH DISTRICT REPORT

*Serving the citizens of Chelan and Douglas counties
and parts of Grant and Okanogan counties*



REPRESENTATIVE
MIKE ARMSTRONG

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LEGISLATORS

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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Now that the 2001 legislative session is under way, our top priority for the next few months is to negotiate and pass a responsible two-year spending plan for state government. The challenges are significant, but if we work together, there is no reason they can't be overcome.

We also have taken to Olympia a plan that positively addresses the concerns you have shared with us: improving our roads and schools, helping our senior citizens obtain prescription drugs, promoting stable water and energy supplies, protecting your property rights, and more. Achieving our goals will require bipartisan backing, as the House remains evenly split with 49 Republicans and 49 Democrats, like it was during the 1999 and 2000 sessions.

We look forward to working with our fellow lawmakers to negotiate a common-sense budget and craft constructive responses to our state's most pressing needs. And we pledge to do so in ways that are respectful, inclusive and in the best interests of the 12th District and Washington.

Clyde Ballard

Clyde Ballard
Co-Speaker of the House

Mike Armstrong

Mike Armstrong
State Representative

OUR STATE NEEDS NEW SOURCES OF ENERGY

The rising cost of energy already has cost workers their jobs as manufacturers were forced to scale back. Businesses have felt the effects, and now households are, as the enormous surcharges imposed by local utilities statewide are showing up on household energy bills. Just think what these increases will mean to those who live on fixed incomes!

While demand for electricity has steadily risen, it's been a quarter-century since Washington has seen a major commitment to building new energy-generating facilities. The governor has vetoed proposed tax incentives for companies that want to build power plants in our state, or upgrade their facilities to produce more energy. We sure could use that additional energy now.

To ease this burden, we need to clear a regulatory path that will encourage new generation facilities to be developed to meet our state's energy needs. And we need to take immediate action to encourage consumers and businesses to conserve more energy until we can safely meet the demand.



GIVING YOU A SAY ABOUT WATER MANAGEMENT

Between the rivers, reservoirs, lakes and farms in our district, we know how a sound water management strategy is crucial for people, agriculture, fish and electricity generation.

And we've seen how the stewardship of Washington's water supply is making headlines like never before. Cities are suing the state Department of Ecology for its handling of water rights applications. One county judge has ruled that conservancy boards, established by the Legislature to reduce water-rights gridlock, do not have the authority to transfer water from agricultural use to municipal use. Another judge

has told the Ecology Department to do a better job of enforcing its rule on water metering. Last summer, for the first time in our state, water normally used for irrigation was diverted to help salmon, under a provision in the Endangered Species Act.

Our plan for the 2001 legislative session includes answering the question about conservancy board authority, and exploring the creation of adequate water reserves off-stream to assure that water is available when it's needed. We are also urging the governor to change the policies of the Department of Ecology that have created a staggering backlog of water rights permits. The current practice of forcing landowners to wait several years to get a permit is outrageous and unacceptable. It must be changed!

Most importantly, we want to change the way government makes the rules that affect you – and that includes regulations about water. Let's allow agencies like the Ecology Department to adopt rules, but let's also require those agencies to bring their new rules before the Legislature for approval during the following session. That'll give your elected representatives, not agency bureaucrats, the last word on regulations.



A COMMON-SENSE BUDGET: OUR FIRST PRIORITY



We've had a tremendous run of prosperity in some areas of our state, particularly around Puget Sound. But for the first time in nearly a decade, we see signs of a softening economy. As a result, state government expects to have less tax revenue to fund services — just after voters in November passed education initiatives that require millions of dollars in new spending.

The people in our rural communities have benefited the least from the state's economic growth. Agriculture has been hit especially hard, with some orchardists giving up and uprooting their fruit trees. We know that citizens are not in a mood for higher taxes until they are certain that government is using every available dollar as efficiently as it can.

It is against this backdrop that we must develop and agree on a budget that keeps government living within its means, while maintaining essential services and respecting all of the initiatives approved by the people – whether they increase spending (I-728, I-732) or limit spending (I-601, I-695). While the budget has some challenges, there's no reason why we shouldn't have an agreement before the end of the regular session in April.

LET'S GET OUR PEOPLE AND PRODUCTS MOVING AGAIN

We may not see gridlock on the roads of north central Washington, but we know what it's like to live in an area with an economy that depends on moving people and products safely on the highways.

It's time to stop analyzing the situation. We know our roads are in need of expansion and repair. We've known it for years. Our goal this session must be to develop a long-term plan that we can take to the people and say, "this will make our roads safer, our economy stronger, and get us home to our families sooner at the end of each day."

**REP. BALLARD WILL PRESIDE AS
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE FOR HIS
FOURTH CONSECUTIVE TERM.**

